



**VALLEY LIFE: ALICEN VERA**  
THE CALWORKS PROGRAM COORDINATOR  
AWARDED FOR STUDENT GUIDANCE



**OPINION: DEATH TO MONARCH**  
AFTER 72 YEARS, IT IS TIME FOR THE VALLEY COLLEGE MASCOT TO RETIRE

# LA County issues mandatory vaccines

The county's Board of Supervisors discusses plans to slowly implement a vaccine mandate.



THE VALLEY STAR | AVA ROSATE

**VACCINE-** West Hollywood bar and restaurant Hi Tops required proof of vaccination before the city mandated it. West Hollywood started requiring vaccine verification following an emergency executive order on Sept. 10 and patrons have until Oct. 11 to verify their status.

**MARCOS FRANCO**  
MANAGING EDITOR

Los Angeles County has mandated a vaccine requirement that will require proof of vaccination to enter businesses including bars, breweries, wineries and nightclubs.

Patrons hoping to enter listed establishments will be required to show proof of at least one dose of the vaccine beginning on Oct. 7 and be fully vaccinated by Nov. 4. This order follows the board of supervisors meeting last Wednesday in an attempt to limit virus transmission in Los Angeles. The mandate will apply to all parts of the county except Long Beach and Pasadena which have their own health departments. Although the order does not include restaurants, public health officials suggest vaccine verification for indoor dining.

"This is a reasonable path forward that will position us to be better able to break the cycle of surges," said LA County Department of Public Health Director Barbara Ferrer during Wednesday's meeting, according to the LA Times.

Although case trends continue to decline, Los Angeles has recently struggled with the delta-variant, first presenting itself in June. The new strain of the virus ravaged the county over the summer, with fully-vaccinated people accounting for nearly 20 percent of those infected. More recently, infections are down nearly 24 percent across California in the last 14 days, however the urgency for mitigating the spread of the delta variant is a priority for public health officials. The LA City Council first

began discussions of a vaccine mandate in early August, an ordinance that covered most businesses throughout the city of Los Angeles. Vaccine requirements are still an ongoing discussion among the council, which plans to soon implement a more thorough vaccine mandate for the city.

The city of West Hollywood issued an emergency executive order on Oct. 11, requiring anyone visiting businesses or city facilities in West Hollywood to provide proof of vaccination. This sweeping mandate targets more than the nightlife gatherings covered in LA County's order and also includes restaurants, salons, barbershops and health and fitness centers.

Certain businesses and concert venues throughout LA County including Walt Disney Concert Hall had announced

plans to require full vaccination by Oct. 9, prior to the announcement of a local ordinance.

After full FDA approval of the Pfizer vaccine on Aug. 23, a regulation requiring the vaccine became easier for local government to implement. The Pfizer shot is approved for individuals 16 and older, although health officials recommend the vaccine for anyone 12 years old and up. Rather than being on an emergency use authorization, full approval ensures that the vaccine has been tested for at least six months following the EUA and the benefits far outweigh the side effects.

There are currently three accepted versions of proof of vaccination. One is the standard CDC issued vaccination card including name, type of vaccine provided and dates of doses. The second is documentation of vac-

ination provided by a healthcare provider. Digital vaccine records, typically in the form of QR codes, are also accepted to verify vaccination status. A photo of either version will be accepted.

Discussion of phony vaccination cards being sold on the internet as well as social media platforms including Facebook and Instagram have become increasingly popular with forged cards being sold for up to \$250 according to NPR. This continuing trend could prove to be a challenge for public safety officials at ensuring vaccine records are legitimate. The purchase or sale of fake COVID-19 vaccination cards is a federal offense that carries a fine up to \$5,000 and up to five years in prison. The FBI released a public service announcement, alerting people of the growing trend in illegitimate cards.

"By misrepresenting yourself as vaccinated when entering schools, mass transit, workplaces, gyms, or places of worship, you put yourself and others around you at risk of contracting COVID-19," read the statement. "Additionally, the unauthorized use of an official government agency's seal (such as HHS or the CDC) is a crime."

## THE FACTS

According to data from the Los Angeles Times, 66.5 percent of Californians have one vaccine dose and 59.8 percent are fully vaccinated.

In Los Angeles County, at least 60.5 percent of Angelenos are fully vaccinated, as of Sept. 29.

# Free menstrual products for students

A bill was sent to Gov. Gavin Newsom that would require colleges in California to give their students free menstrual products.

**EDWARD SEGAL**  
STAFF WRITER

If students are in need of menstrual products at any of the nine LACCD campuses, they will soon have free access to them in women's and non-gendered restrooms, as proposed in a bill sent to Gov. Gavin Newsom on Sept. 9.

The bill, sent by Assemblywoman Cristina Garcia (D-Bell Gardens), titled "Menstrual Equity," would require colleges in California to provide menstrual products to students free of charge, according to NPR. The Family Resource Center at Valley College started distributing free feminine hygiene products to

**"Having convenient and free access to these products... would alleviate the anxiety of trying to find a product when out in public."**

-Assemblywoman Cristina Garcia

people last year, but if this new bill is signed, starting Jan. 1 students will no longer need to show their school ID to sign in and receive the products.

Assemblywoman Garcia wrote on the necessity of the bill in a press release.

"Often periods arrive at inconvenient times," said Garcia. "Having convenient and free access to these products... would alleviate the anxiety of trying to find a product when out in public."

Former members of Valley's Associated Student Union have urged the college to provide free pads and tampons, but it wasn't until last year that they succeeded in getting students the resources they may not have had access to otherwise.

When the ASU found out students had to pay to get menstrual products, the officers took it upon themselves to provide "free sanitary napkins and tampons to any students in need," as previously stated by the Valley Star.

The idea to give students access to menstrual products came from former ASU Commissioner of Student Life Maricela Garcia, after she was informed that the health office only provided one sanitary napkin or tampon per day. Commissioner Garcia proposed the program "Code Pink" to supply women with bags of three sanitary napkins or tampons twice a month. This was a massive step forward in providing students the resources they need, and with this bill possibly signed soon, students

will have full access to as many products as they need.

Many students at Valley would consider themselves low-or-middle-income, and for them, menstrual products may not be as accessible.

"In this nationally-drawn sample of college attending women in the United States, 14.2 percent had ever experienced period poverty in the past year,"

according to the Boston Medical Center. "An additional 10 percent had experienced it every month."

In addition, it may cause embarrassment if a student who doesn't have access to these products were to get their period at school. Often, students are forced "to choose between hygiene and dignity or staying in class," according to CalMatters, a non-profit

California policy newsroom. If the bill is signed, students will no longer have to worry about how to fulfill this basic need of life while they are on campus.

"I just want to make sure that female students are not limited to one pad," said former Commissioner Garcia in 2019, and with the new bill, the state is doing just that.



PHOTO ILLUSTRATION | JEREMY RUIZ

**PRODUCTS-** Menstruation products may soon be available to LACCD students free of charge.

# Monarch Cafe offers online ordering

**BENJAMIN ROYER**  
VALLEY LIFE EDITOR

Food ready at the touch of a button; Valley College starts an online ordering service for Monarch Cafe.

Valley's campus cafeteria, Monarch Cafe, is now available online. Starting the week of Sep. 19, students are able to place an order and pick it up as they arrive on campus. Through Pacific Dining, Monarch Cafe's entire menu is available to select, pay for and pick up depending on the time and date of choice.

"The cafeteria has been great about safety," student Steven Pierson said. "They are doing a good job to keep us from getting sick."

From their devices, students and faculty can place an order and pick it up five days in advance. To place an order Monarchs must create an account, select their food or drinks and checkout.

Pacific Dining is the district's official food vendor, providing the food for Valley and the eight other campuses. After signing a 10-year contract with the vendor in June 2017, all cafeteria food has been provided by the company.

Valley personally contracts the Lion Cafe to Movita Juice Bar, which is set to re-open in the upcoming weeks. Through the Movita Juice Bar website, students can pre-order their drinks for pickup. All food and beverages options besides the Valley bookstore now offer online pickup.

Previously, online ordering was not an option on campus. Students either had to go inside Monarch Cafe or the bookstore to order and purchase food and drinks.

Posters are set up outside Monarch Cafe advertising the new service, but across campus, students such as first-year fire technology student Jayden Williams did not know about the launch.

Open Monday through Thursday, the Monarch Cafe provides students an area to eat, chat and study. The online ordering system allows customers the convenience of cutting the line and contactless pickup through mobile ordering.

"If I am feeling lazy and I just don't feel like going there [Monarch Cafe], I can prepare and do it ahead of time and it would be easier," said Williams. "Just to keep people separated, so we are not in an enclosed environment. It would be pretty good for social distancing and such."

## FOR MORE INFO:

Students and faculty can visit the Monarch Cafe to proceed with in-person ordering. For those who want to place an online order, they can visit [www.lavc.edu](http://www.lavc.edu) to learn more.

Follow up-to-date campus news and events on Twitter @ValleyStarNews

These features and more can be found in full @ [www.thevalleystarnews.com](http://www.thevalleystarnews.com)

# Anti-camping laws disperse homeless population

Amendments to ordinance 41.18 enforced throughout the city, pushing the homeless 500 feet away from schools, day care centers and designated overpasses.

ISAAC DEKTOR  
NEWS EDITOR

Mayor Eric Garcetti has recently signed changes to a local law restricting where people can camp and store private property within the city.

The sweeping amendments to ordinance 41.18, which was passed by LA City Council in a 13-2 vote, gives officials the legal right to disperse homeless populations and confiscate private property from public spaces. Councilmembers Nirthy Raman and Mike Bonin both voted against the law which stipulates that no person obstructs public right-of-ways, restricts public sleeping, lying, sitting and storing private property. Idling and storing are restricted to five feet away from building entrances and exits, 10 feet away from driveways and two feet away from fire hydrants.

Garcetti issued a statement the week following the amended law's outset in which he ensured his constituents that enforcement would occur hand-in-glove with education and outreach.

"We don't need to choose between keeping our public spaces safe and clean, and connecting Angelenos experiencing homelessness with the ser-

vices and housing they need," Garcetti said. "We can and will do both, as we respond to this crisis in a way that is compassionate and responsive to the urgent needs in our communities."

**"If we look at the whole system, we may be able to prevent people from becoming homeless in the first place."**

-Eugene Scott

The changes come months after the city approved new funding for proposition HHH, committing over \$1 billion to be spent on affordable housing over the course of this decade. Since the outset of the allocated money, however, the homelessness crisis has gotten visibly worse.

While the latest anti-camping laws will make public spaces more usable for Angelenos by dispersing the homeless, some believe it to be a palliative approach that does not address the systemic nature of the crisis.

Eugene Scott, a profes-

sor of anthropology at Valley College and advisor to the Anthropological Society, views the crisis holistically.

"Our capitalist model addresses those parts separately rather than how each interacts to contribute to the entirety of the problem," Scott said. "If we look at the whole system, we may be able to prevent people from being homeless in the first place."

Scott lambasted the new ordinance for addressing only the observable malady of homelessness.

"I think symbolically - hiding them from view - it gives the appearance that we're doing something, and we're treating the symptom without addressing the root cause," Scott said.

Ken Craft, president and CEO of Hope of the Valley, a non-profit organization combating homelessness in the San Fernando Valley, is supportive of the anti-camping laws.

"In the real world, we're dealing with neighbors and businesses whose rights must be respected," Craft said. "There's got to be a balance - that's what the city is doing. I'm not for any type of enforcement without an alternative solution."

The group operates five thrift stores throughout the San Fernan-



HOMELESSNESS- Unhoused individual Mark Riggers is seen walking to his belongings under the 405 freeway underpass, only a few miles away from Los Angeles City College.

VALLEY STAR | LUIS FLORES

do Valley - the proceeds of which circulate back into their mission to supply housing to the unsheltered. Thirteen shelters, and a job center among other resources are managed by Hope of the Valley according to their website.

The non-profit also shelters those in need through their Tiny Home Villages — six en-

claves scattered throughout the valley — which consist of 64 square-foot homes with a host of amenities ranging from air conditioning to onsite meals and mental health assistance.

As of 2020, there were 63,706 total homeless individuals in Los Angeles county. Within service planning area 2 alone,

which includes Valley College and stretches from Agoura Hills to Glendale and extends all the way up to Santa Clarita, Los Angeles Homeless Service Authority surveyed 9,108 total homeless individuals, 2,493 of whom are not residing in shelters.

## Taliban releases new policies regarding women, education and dress code

Since the United States' exit on Aug. 31, the rights that women held throughout the country's occupation of Afghanistan have started to dissolve.



GRAPHIC ILLUSTRATION | MATTHEW ROYER

AFGHANISTAN- Progress for women's rights begin to deteriorate as the Taliban regime takes power.

EMILY GRODIN  
STAFF WRITER

On Aug. 31 the Taliban released a statement regarding policies surrounding women and education, where Higher

Education Minister Abdul Baqi Haqqani explained the details of the new rules in place. This announcement was made just one day after the Taliban raised their flag over the palace.

According to the BBC,

Haqqani announced that while women would still be allowed to receive an education, it would not be allowed alongside men. Universities will be segregated by gender for the first time since 2001.

This policy means that men will no longer be allowed to teach women in the class-

**"It feels like a step back after years of progress for women in Afghanistan."**

- Donna Mortley

room. This has raised concerns, as a female replacement will need to be found for every male that was previously teaching a mixed class. Haqqani has insisted there are workarounds to this, suggesting technology be used or that male teachers teach female students from behind a curtain. For many, it comes as disappointing information.

"It feels like a step back after years of progress for women in Afghanistan," said Donna Morley of the Los Angeles Community College District. When asked about the impact these policies might have on Afghan women, Morley said, "I think that it will be discouraging for women as they have had so much more relative freedom."

In addition to ending the

mixed classroom education system, a dress code will be implemented for female students. Following the attacks on the World Trade Center in New York on Sept. 11, 2001, the restrictive dress codes that had been imposed under Taliban rule were brought to an end when US forces entered Afghanistan. After 2001, and up until Aug. 31 of 2021, female students could dress as they pleased, and did not have to wear a hijab. But with the new policies in place, women may be required to wear one. And there is no doubt additional face coverings will be mandated according to the BBC.

These new policies are beginning to look like a return to the strict Shariah law the Taliban enforced in the years leading up to 9/11. According to the NY Times, during this time women had very little freedom in Afghanistan. They could not leave their homes without a male escort. They could not work outside of the home. They could not attend school. The Taliban would carry out harsh punishment if these restrictions were not followed, such as public lashings and beatings.

Shariah is a loosely inter-

preted law based on the Quran. Although the Quran does not actually include a set of laws, it instead explains how one can achieve a path to a moral life. According to Muslims for Progressive Values, depending on the interpretation, women could be granted many freedoms. But another interpretation could leave them with very little rights. This has long been debated in Islamic law.

Afghan women are in fear of what the future holds for them. Whichever interpretation the Taliban decides on, one thing is clear. The freedoms that Afghan women have held are slowly being revoked. It is just a question of what is next for them.

### THE FACTS

Afghanistan universities will be segregated by gender for the first time since 2001 according to the BBC. The United States pulled out its final troops from the country on Aug. 30.

## Earthquakes shake greater-Los Angeles area

While no damage materialized, the shocks present a pattern and serve as test for new software designed to meet the needs of Angelenos and Californians alike.

MATTHEW ROYER  
POLITICAL NEWS EDITOR

The greater-Los Angeles area has been the focus of the seismic world for the past few weeks.

Two earthquakes shook residents across the community, including students and faculty at Valley College. On Sept. 13, Thousand Oaks was hit with a 3.6 earthquake, while on Sept. 17, Carson was hit with a similar jolt of 4.3. No damage was found in city limits after a routine systematic survey by the Los Angeles Fire Department.

"We live in a very seismically active area," said Associate Professor of Geography Claudia Hasenhüttl. "... In fact, studies have shown that we experience an earthquake roughly every three minutes in Southern California, though most of these quakes are so weak they are imperceptible to us."

The two quakes were an early showing in how the state now alerts citizens of seismic events. MyShake, an app developed by the Berkeley Seismology Lab at UC Berkeley,

"builds a worldwide earthquake early warning network so that communities can reduce the impact of earthquakes," according to their website.

The app works by collecting data from cell phones that have downloaded the app. This lets MyShake use devices like sensors to create a network to better predict earthquakes. In being able to predict what matches the model of the earthquake, the service alerts Californians when an earthquake is about to occur near their location.

**"When it comes to earthquakes in SoCal, it is not a question of if, but when, so be ready!"**

- Claudia Hasenhüttl

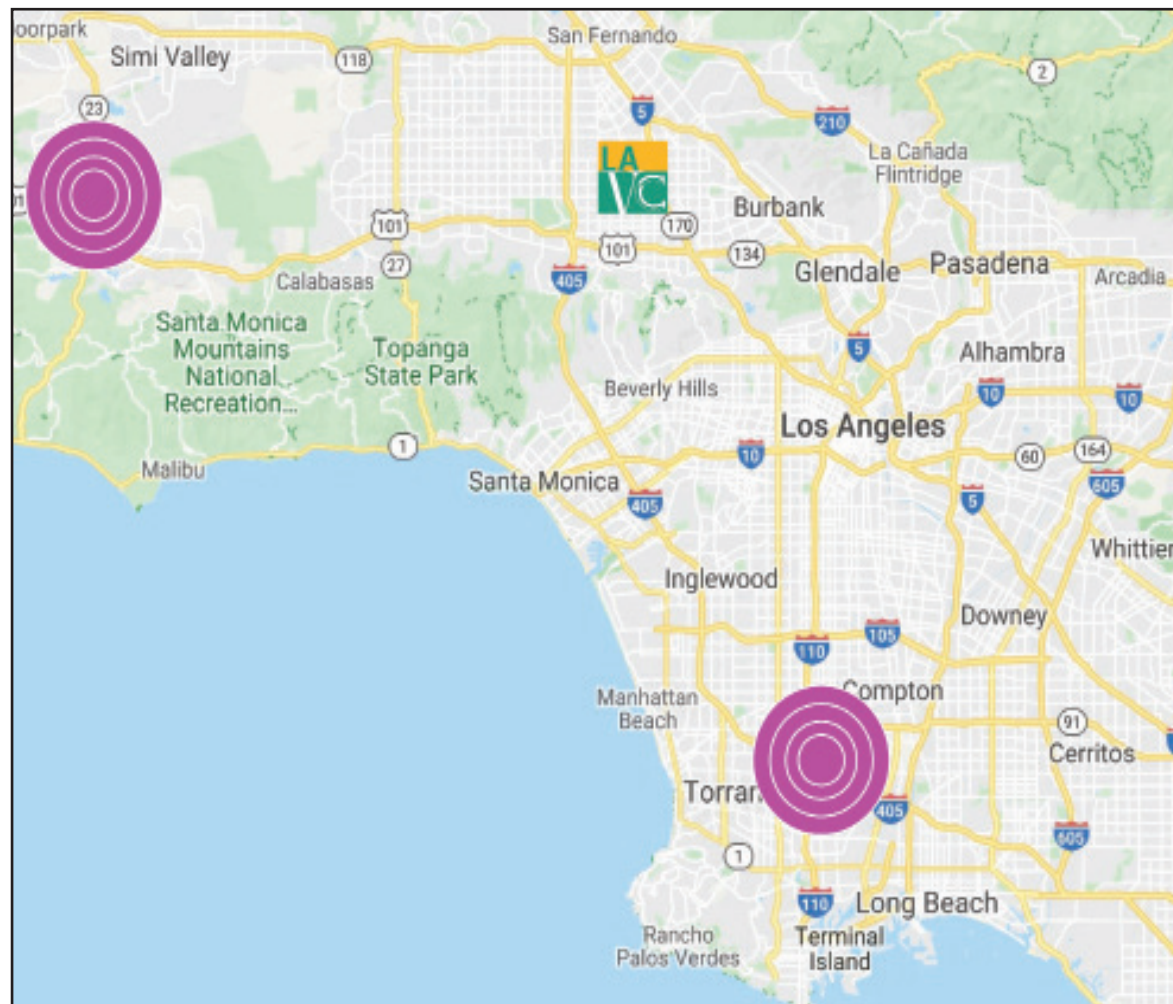
The State of California started using MyShake in their earthquake preparedness center in Sep. 2020.

"Nothing can replace families having a plan for earthquakes and other emergencies,"

said Gov. Gavin Newsom in October 2019 announcing the development of the app in a press release. "... We know the big one might be around the corner.

California offers a seven-step program for earthquake safety: First, secure your space. Next, plan to be safe, the state insists on creating a disaster plan. After that, organizing disaster supplies, water, radio and first-aid kits is suggested. Step four asks to minimize financial hardship, gather important documents and consider insurance. The fifth step gives the common drop, cover and hold-on instructions when an earthquake hits. Lastly, California authorities suggest improving safety in different surroundings and restoring back to normal.

"Anyone living in a seismically active region should talk about an emergency plan and have a supply kit ready for the entire family," said Hasenhüttl. "... And remember, when it comes to earthquakes in SoCal, it is not a question of if, but when, so be ready!"



GRAPHIC ILLUSTRATION | MATTHEW ROYER

Quake- A map of greater-Los Angeles area depicts the latest earthquakes to occur near Valley College.

# Alicen Vera honored with Classified Employee of the Year Award

Former Valley student working with CalWORKs receives California Community College's Board of Governors award for her relentless work and mentorship skills.



VALLEY STAR | JEREMY RUIZ

RECIPIENT - Alicen Vera received CCC Board of Governors award for her work with CALWORKs at Valley.

ANNETTE M. LESURE  
STAFF WRITER

The California Community College's Board of Governors awarded five recipients across the state for their exempla-

ry work as community college classified employees. One just happened to be Valley College's own Alicen Vera. Vera's original duties as CalWORKs Program Coordinator consisted of assist-

ing students in the program until a realization of homelessness among students not qualifying for assistance, motivated her to help with their emergency needs. A handful of co-workers began assisting the mother of

four in gathering supplies and resources to help aid students in need of all types of urgent support, from gas money to moving expenses. The Valley College Child Development alumna then launched the Helping Hands Project in 2012, alongside CalWORKs Program Director Ellie Rabani.

**"I would love to see a well-funded institutionalized 'Basic Needs' program in all community colleges. If students' basic needs are met, students will be successful. It's not a very difficult concept."**

- Alicen Vera

The program provides assistance to all Valley students, regardless of their situation.

"Alicen sees herself as an officer of LAVC and sees that as 'it's my job to help a student no matter what,'" said Rabani. "It doesn't matter what day it

is, she's willing to help students with urgent services from domestic violence, food or shelter. She takes that role in the office also, with a staff of twenty-plus people. She's always available to them."

Vera spends her time away from work barbecuing and playing board games with her family that she says is her inspiration to be a role model and help others in need. The busy mother whose kids range from ages 13 to 30, explained how her secure household growing up made her sensitive to how underprivileged some kids are.

"Seeing these students being so grateful over receiving a simple breakfast before their first class absolutely fills my heart," said the award recipient of the young students that have most affected her life throughout her years of work. "It breaks my heart to see them being turned away by their parents as soon as they reach legal age. Giving them hope by connecting them to resources and agencies that are available to them is extremely rewarding."

Not even a pandemic stopped Vera from fundraising or supporting stu-

dents in the last 18 months.

"Alicen exemplifies Valley's dedication to supporting our students," said Valley College President Barry Gribbons. "She not only leads an incredible team providing great service for our CalWORKs students, she goes above and beyond ensuring that our students are able to continue their higher education plans."

Maintaining a supportive and family-oriented Monarch environment has been the theme for this hard-working inspiration who attributes her award to all that have helped her.

"I share my award with my co-workers because I really can't do it alone," said Vera. "I am so blessed to have wonderful, caring co-workers who are compassionate about helping others. A lot of them know how it feels to be without food, housing and many things we take for granted. [They are] a wonderful village."

Vera hopes to continue her efforts at Valley.

"[In the future] I would love to see a well-funded institutionalized 'Basic Needs' program in all community colleges," said Vera. "If students' basic needs are met, students will be successful."

# "The Card Counter" plays a poor hand well

Oscar Isaac stars in what can be characterized as a redux of director Paul Schrader's classic films.

MATTHEW ROYER  
POLITICAL NEWS EDITOR

Twenty years ago the United States was attacked, and what followed was a decades-long war that physically and mentally damaged those carrying out heinous acts on behalf of their government. This is one of those stories.

Producer Martin Scorsese and director Paul Schrader's "The Card Counter" follows William Tell (Oscar Isaac), a veteran of the War on Terror, as he travels the poker circuit across the Eastern United States. Tell battles his demons as he moves, as reminders of his life in prison and post-traumatic stress from the war. Enjoying the repetition poker gives him, Tell takes Cirk (Tye Sheridan), a son of one of his war buddies under his wing, as well as La Linda (Tiffany Haddish), a financial backer for his poker-related escapades. What follows is a journey of revenge, redemption and grief as Tell and Cirk clash with related enemies from the war, both physical and in their heads.

While similar to Schrader's prior films 1976's "Taxi Driver" and 2017's "First Reformed," which tackle the concept of a man consumed by their craft until they cannot continue anymore, his 2021 version of the story imaginatively uses inner-dialogue to portray Tell's story. As the viewer, when Tell discovers something himself, so does the audience.

Isaac gives a powerful performance, showing how war can damage a soul psychologically.



PHOTO COURTESY OF FOCUS FEATURES

CARD COUNTER - Oscar Isaac and Tiffany Haddish star in Paul Schrader's "The Card Counter."

This is best seen with subtle movements Isaac's character Tell gives throughout the film. The veteran covers his own DNA, constantly studies others and shows his struggle with commitment, whether with people or even his own hobbies, playing into the life he used to lead.

Haddish and Sheridan both give solid supporting performances, portraying their respective character's ambitions flawlessly. Haddish, in particular, makes the transition from comedy to drama without a hitch.

Moviegoers might go into the theater thinking they are going to get a film about literally "counting cards" or poker, but

instead receive a gritty character study that allows for many questions to be asked about the human condition. In fact, much of the story was left out of the promo material, leaving a new experience for the audience as they pay the admission and sit down for a two-hour escape from their everyday lives.

While the intentions are understood, the score of the film, put together by Robert Levon Been, feels out of place and distracts the viewer with its oddly timed sounds and lyric-filled music. If a more traditional score was used by Schrader, the film would have been more coherent during pivotal moments.

Due to its plot structure and themes of recent wars, "The Card Counter" is not for everybody, but for those intrigued, the film is a triumph for film in 2021. A sure bet for awards season starting in just a few months.

**VALLEY'S STARS**



Rated R  
Worth the watch  
Now playing in theatres

the  
**VALLEY STAR**  
The Independent Student Newspaper of Los Angeles Valley College

**NEW OPPORTUNITY**

Are you interested in Journalism?

Are you interested in building a writing portfolio?

Have specialized skills?

Enjoy writing about Entertainment, Sports, Campus Happenings, etc.?

**Openings Available For:**

- Writers/Reporters
- Photographers
- Graphic Designers
- Cartoonists/Illustrators

**Interested?**

Please email Advisor Bill Dauber: [dauberwj@lavc.edu](mailto:dauberwj@lavc.edu) and/or Advisor Gerard Burkhardt: [burkhagi@laccd.edu](mailto:burkhagi@laccd.edu)

## VALLEY VIEW | HOW DOES IT FEEL TO BE BACK ON CAMPUS?

TEXT BY MATTHEW ROYER

PHOTOS BY LUIS FLORES



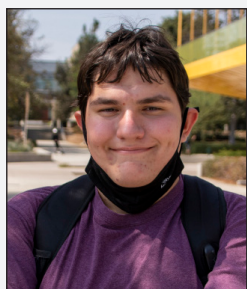
"It's interesting to see professors speak with their mask on, it's kind of tough to hear certain things. It's not the same, but it feels kind of good. As humans we need interaction."

- SAKIB SALEHUDDIN, COMMUNICATION STUDIES



"It feels great. We did online schooling in high school and it was difficult and isolating, so it's nice to see people. It's easier to learn as well."

- NATALIE HAROUN, POLITICAL SCIENCE



"Oh, it feels great. Back in-person, back together with friends. It's just great to be out of the house."

- CHASE MARTINEZ, CINEMA



"It feels so refreshing to be back with students trying to get ahead. And the weather is so nice."

- CLAUDIA REGNE, SPANISH AND GENERAL EDUCATION



"Great, it's a lot different and better now that we can see students and customers in store."

- MARC ROBINSON, CASHIER AT THE MONARCH COLLEGE STORE



"It's really fun for me. I've been homeschooled for a long time, so being on this campus is really fun... I thought it would be lonely, but it's not. I made a friend and everything."

- JANA PALMER, DUAL ENROLLMENT



Adrian Ramirez | Valley Star  
Cathy Pyles, the director of the Los Angeles Valley College production of All Together Now, rehearses with her class.



Luis Flores | Valley Star  
Actors (L-R) Chris Jai Alex, Aver Hamilton and Ricky Romanek practice fight choreography on Monarch Square Monday.



A construction site, framed



Bookstore cashier Marc Robinson (L) rings up Valley College student Zakeriah Monje (R) shopping in between classes.



Stacks of books lay atop a table in a conference room within the Humanities building that were brought in to be given away by Patrick Hunter, the chair of the english department on Monday. The books, which Hunter said comprised roughly 40 percent of his book collection, are free and available for students to take.

Jeremy Ruiz | Valley Star

# We Are Back! Valley students return to campus



Luis Flores | Valley Star  
Construction worker on the roof of the Valley Academic and Cultural Center construction site, viewed through the construction fence on an overcast Monday afternoon.



Luis Flores | Valley Star



Luis Flores | Valley Star

The Lion Cafe has remained closed since the initial pandemic shutdown of March 2020, but it plans to reopen for business on Oct. 4.



Christopher Perez | Valley Star

Valley freshman Anahit Cholakyah practices diving at the Aquatic Center on Sept. 22 on a day in which temperatures reached a balmy 98 degrees.



Ryan Beauchamp | Valley Star

Students enjoy lunch in the shade of the outdoor cafeteria area under the Student Union building.



Luis Flores | Valley Star

Chris Everly, son of one of the Everly brothers holds up his guitar pick outside the music building Monday.



VALLEY STAR | STEPHEN CASTANEDA

COACHING - After leading conditioning drills, athletic director and baseball coach Dave Mallas talks to the team in a huddle during practice at Valley College on Monday.

## Dave Mallas named new athletic director

Removing the interim status, Dave Mallas officially replaces Jim Fenwick as Valley College's athletic director.

BENJAMIN ROYER  
VALLEY LIFE EDITOR

Coach Dave Mallas stands on the pitching mound, instructing his players as they listen to every word he says. His inviting presence has made it easy to be around, the same as when he entered Valley College 18 years ago. Mallas' demeanor and attitude now has to transfer to the athletic director's office where he takes the first steps in year one of his new job.

Starting from scratch has been a theme in Mallas' coaching career. In 2002, the Diamond Bar native revived Los Angeles Mission College's baseball team after the college cut athletics in 1997. With no active players attached to the college, Mallas built a roster and led the Eagles to its first playoffs run since its return in his second season. The storied coach headed south down the SR-170 Hollywood Freeway to become the Monarchs' man in charge, revitalizing a previously struggling baseball program. Now, 18 years later, Mallas takes lead of Valley athletics during the tail-end of the COVID-19 pandemic, signaling the start of a new era of Monarchs' sports.

"I know his commitment and great work ethic will help ensure that we continue building a strong athletic program."

"I like to spend time with my family first and foremost . . . If I'm not at Valley, then I'm with them."

- Dave Mallas

When former Athletic Director Jim Fenwick retired after an eight-year stint in December 2020, President Barry Gribbons named Mallas and women's basketball coach Monica Hang to share the co-interim status of athletic director. After six months in the role, Mallas was selected as Valley's answer and permanent option as summer turned into fall.

"Coach Mallas has an incred-



VALLEYSTAR | JEREMY RUIZ

LEADING - Mallas shares a heartfelt moment with his team on Monarch Field. The coach recently took on the position of athletic director.

ible passion for the Monarch family as a whole, but especially Monarch athletics," Gribbons said. "I know his commitment and great work ethic will help ensure that we continue building a strong athletic program."

"I like to spend time with my family first and foremost . . . If I'm not at Valley, then I'm with them."

- Dave Mallas

In his 18 years at Valley, Mallas won two Western State Conference titles and has made the playoffs on three occasions. Though the Monarchs have not had a winning season since 2015, the veteran coach has sustained his job through his reputation on campus.

Before his coaching days, Mallas played baseball at both

Santa Ana College (then known as Rancho Santiago Community College) and California State University, Chico, receiving a bachelor's degree at the latter. Mallas had been a professor in the Health & Physical Education department since joining Valley, teaching courses across his previous 17 years at Valley.

"I definitely miss that," Mallas said about having to relinquish most teaching duties. "It was a community that we had in the adapted PE (physical education) center as well as the pool. With the three assistants we had in the program, that is probably the biggest thing I miss about not teaching, the camaraderie with the assistants and the student body."

As the former advisor of the Abilities Club, Mallas expressed his desire to continue to support the cabinet and general members through attending their events.

Outside of sports, the tenured coach is a family man, beaming in

support of his wife and children.

"I like to spend time with my family first and foremost," Mallas said. "I've got a wife of 20 years, an 18-year-old son that's a senior in high school and a 14-year-old daughter that's a freshman in high school. A lot of family time together and they are both active in sports as well. If I'm not at Valley College, then I am with them."

Fall sports have already started in Mallas' first months as athletic director with football, men's water polo, women's water polo and women's soccer's seasons already underway. Women's basketball's fall campaign is set to start on Oct. 9.

The new athletic director has lofty goals, one of which is creating a list of six sports programs they would like to revive during their term at the top of Monarchs' sports.

"In the past we had men and women's cross country dropped, we had men and women's track

and field dropped, so obviously we would like to get those back," Mallas said. "For 17 years we've been trying to add men's soccer, [Valley has] never had men's soccer for as long as I've heard. We had women's volleyball taken away at least 17 years ago, cause it has never been here as long as I have been here."

Since being promoted to athletic director, Mallas does not plan on stepping down as head coach of the baseball program. Mallas will stay on as the coach for the 2022 season. The future is in sight for Mallas, but admits that the present is of importance.

"We are just trying to get through COVID right now," Mallas said. "As we get our student population up and start to get students back on campus, those [goals] are just some of the things that we will look forward to and where we would like to get going."



EDITOR-IN-CHIEF  
LAYOUT EDITOR  
CASSANDRA NAVA

MANAGING EDITOR  
MARCOS FRANCO

PHOTO EDITOR  
AVA ROSATE

VALLEY LIFE EDITOR  
BENJAMIN ROYER

NEWS EDITOR  
ISAAC DEKTOR

SPORTS EDITOR  
STEPHEN CASTANEDA

POLITICAL NEWS  
EDITOR  
SOCIAL MEDIA  
EDITOR  
MATTHEW ROYER

GRAPHIC  
DESIGNERS  
DON ANTHONY

MATTHEW ROYER

STAFF WRITERS  
EMILY GRODIN

ANNETE M. LESURE

EDWARD SEGAL

PHOTOGRAPHERS  
RYAN BEAUCHAMP

STEPHEN CASTANEDA

LUIS FLORES

CHRISTOPHER PEREZ

ADRIAN RAMIREZ

AVA ROSATE

JEREMY RUIZ

CARMELITA THOMAS

ADVISORS  
BILL DAUBER  
GERARD BURKHART

### GOT A LETTER TO THE EDITOR?

Letters to the editor can be submitted online at [www.thevalleystarnews.com](http://www.thevalleystarnews.com). Letters must be limited to 300 words and may be edited for content. Full name and contact information must be supplied in order for letters to be printed. Send by Thursday for the following week's issue.

# Valley College falls short of ensuring student safety

As the district scrambles to come up with a plan to prevent a virus outbreak on all nine campuses, the regulations bring up more questions than answers.

MARCOS FRANCO  
MANAGING EDITOR

Returning to campus has been anything but smooth sailing as the district implements new requirements for students and faculty; a burden to adjust to in the middle of the fall semester.

Although the LACCD did not require students and faculty to provide proof of vaccination or submit to regular testing at the start of the semester, the revised Board Policy 2900 switches the contractual agreement given to students by the campus. The change tosses students a curveball as it is inconvenient and too short notice to implement a vaccine requirement.

While the constant-changing transition has been stressful enough for students, the confusion surrounding the deadline to submit proof of vaccination is an additional burden. While the updated policy states that all students and faculty must be fully vaccinated and have taken the baseline polymerase chain reaction (PCR) test by Oct. 18, the LACCD Emergency Operations Center recently released a statement

claiming the date to be Oct. 8.

The abrupt change is a poor attempt by the district to make up for the mediocre job they have done at monitoring virus outbreaks on campus. At the start of the semester, Valley College along with the eight other campuses in the district issued a new policy requiring students and faculty to perform a symptom self check prior to arriving at campus. The flawed system is not a reliable means to limit the spread of the virus on campus, as it was not made widely known to be a requirement for in-person classes. Students have no incentive to complete the COVID-19 self assessment and are not penalized for failing to do so. As for the students who do check in, their assessments are not reviewed as the college creates a plan to monitor student and staff check-ins.

"Faculty or staff may ask students to show their Cleared4 results when they enter a classroom or building," said Valley President Barry Gribbons. "We are developing additional systems to check for student and employee compliance."

With the revision, Valley



VALLEY STAR | AVA ROSATE

SAFETY- English instructor Holly Batty lectures a class full of masked students on Sept. 27.

has partnered with Cleared4, a health verification platform that helps organizations monitor their teams' COVID-19 symptoms. The program will maintain vaccination records for all staff and students as well as administer testing for all nine colleges in the district.

The requirements are intrusive as they require students to upload not only their vaccina-

tion records, but also to submit proof of health insurance. If a student does not have health insurance, they must submit a statement that discloses so. If testing and vaccines are already provided to students at no additional cost, there is no reason to request proof of insurance.

As Valley recovers from the 2020 school year — the lowest enrollment count in five years

— the college cannot afford large portions of its student population to drop their classes. According to Valley President Barry Gribbons, an estimated 75 percent of classes were canceled last fall as a result of the dip in enrollment. With the new regulations going into effect, students are more compelled to drop their face-to-face classes and finish their educational jour-

ney in an online environment.

Given the recent trend in fully vaccinated individuals testing positive for the delta-variant, the college should already have a set plan on what to do if an instructor tests positive. As of now, it is assumed that if this were to happen, the class would likely move back to the dull setting of Zoom.

"I would imagine many professors will decide to move the class online for 10 days while they're quarantining," said Gribbons. "There are other options that could be available, it's possible we could arrange for substitutes, but likely, the instructor would move online for two weeks."

Valley should have announced a vaccine requirement over the summer — prior to the start of the semester — following the CalState system's approach. It is a poor move by the LACCD to switch the contractual agreement given to students prior to the start of the semester. The middle of the semester is possibly the worst time to implement this new policy as students are stressed enough preparing for midterm exams.

## Death to the Monarch: It is time for a new mascot to take the reigns

Valley's mascot's time has come and passed. Inspired by colonization, the figurehead does not accurately represent the Valley College student body.

MATTHEW ROYER  
POLITICAL NEWS EDITOR

Seventy-two years later, it is time for a change to better represent the community and Valley's diverse student body. It is time for a new mascot.

Just west of Valley College's campus lies the Tujunga Wash. The tributary of the Los Angeles River, which lands used to be home to the Tongva indigenous peoples, is also home to The Great Wall of Los Angeles. On this wall hangs a mural, a half-mile stretch dubbed "The History of California." Featured is the arrival of the Spanish who colonized the California Natives during the inquisition, creating the mission system and what became known as the "Houses of Death." A death sparked initially by Spainards King Ferdinand II and Queen

Isabella I, the Monarchs.

The year is 1949, Valley College is founded for a growing San Fernando Valley. The pioneer class is tasked with giving the campus its mascot, a name its students will be known by for years to come. What students select is the Monarch. No, not the butterfly that's pattern can be seen across Southern California, but rather the crown, a symbol of royalty and yes, colonization, as displayed on The Great Wall of Los Angeles.

Students are taught about Spanish colonization throughout their education in California, especially in Los Angeles. Ask a student on campus, there is a good chance they have a memory of building a mission diorama or a field trip to the Mission San Fernando Rey de Espana. These teachings are mandatory through the California Department of Education as part of the history curriculum standards. Something that should

not be taught, intentional or not, is the glamorization of those behind it. The disease and violence carried alongside their names and titles are not those of worth, especially when it comes to embodying Valley College.

A change in mascot name is not something new to schools in the San Fernando Valley. This year El Camino Real Charter High School in Woodland Hills moved on from their 52-year namesake, the Conquistador, to the less controversial Royals or Royales. The charter school requested the help of the Fernandeco Tataviam Band of Mission Indians to better comprehend what this variation of Royals could mean for their programs in relation to Native American understanding. In 1998, Birmingham High School in Van Nuys voted to change their mascot after years of protest. The campus switched from the Braves to a more suitable name of the Patriots, despite the

student body deciding upon Blue Devils to the dismay of the faculty, according to the LA Times.

Although Valley students of 1949 presumably had no ill-intention in their selection of the Monarch, students today deserve the same chance of selecting a better illustration of what the campus and student body represent.

Hypothetically, the Monarch is no longer, the school has plenty of potential options to replace it.

To start, the campus already has a costumed mascot, the Monarch Lion. While not a figure of royalty as the name suggests, the lion has been used as a mascot by many before, including an NFL franchise and comes without the stench that surrounds a colonial-era-inspired name. In fact, Valley's Movita Juice Bar Express is already named "The Lion Cafe."

Without changing the name at all, the aforementioned butterfly could also have the same

effect in replacing the crown figure as a global symbol for rebirth and transformation.

Another suggestion could be the coyotes, who have inhabited the campus even before it was built, as previously reported by The Valley Star. A new name may even rise if students are given the chance to voice their opinions, choosing something that represents the resilient

nature and the success students have found after attending one of the top community colleges in the United States, as listed in a 2021 ranking from Forbes.

Whether it is the lion, the monarch butterfly or a new mascot entirely, Valley has an opportunity to hold vigil for the nickname and announce the death of the Monarch.



VALLEY STAR | MATTHEW ROYER

MASCOT- Valley College's Monarch has outwelcomed its stay.

## One Way or Another: One question, two opposing viewpoints

### Valley College's change in resources serve as a benefit for students

The limited cafeteria hours and cafe closures just make sense for the college.

CASSANDRA NAVA  
EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

Valley College's decision to keep the cafeteria operating at limited hours and closing Movita Juice Bar altogether is the safest option.

With campus open for the fall semester, students are able to return to the in-person classes that were once the norm. While the college does its best to preserve the regularity students felt in the not so distant past, one thing does not remain the same: limited hours for campus services. Sparse foot traffic on campus is the main reason for the cafeteria's shortened hours. While the Monarch Cafe is currently open only from 7:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m., the Movita Juice bar (or Lion Cafe) remains "temporarily closed" for the indefinite future.

While some crave the fresh snacks and coffee offered by these services, the college is not only responding to their smaller headcount of students and faculty, but inadvertently making an executive decision on COVID-19 safety. Mask mandates are set in

place for anyone planning to be in an indoor building on campus, but there is no requirement for outdoors. While masking is strongly suggested outside, there is no way it can be enforced. If Movita Juice Bar was open, and vending machines fully stocked, students and faculty would have trouble keeping their masks on in order to enjoy their snacks. Eating outdoors is considered safe, but there is no enforcement on keeping an at least 6-foot distance from others. This creates an issue of social distancing outdoors, which has no set rules or guidelines.

A bigger problem reveals itself when students want to unmask indoors to enjoy the resources the cafeteria and juice bar has to offer. If a student purchases an iced latte before class hoping to caffeinate during a lecture, they will have to remove their mask, exposing their nose and mouth in order to enjoy their beverage. While a pandemic rages on, unmasking indoors is not the smartest option. Although it only takes a couple of seconds to sip, the student will religiously unmask until they've finished what they started. This poses a problem espe-

cially if there is more than one student planning on eating or drinking in class. One bare face in a class full of masked individuals may not pose as a serious threat of transmission, but it is likely that fellow classmates will have the same idea to quench their thirst. Unmasked students inside a classroom not only violate district policies, but can unintentionally cause the spread of COVID-19.

Masks reduce the spread of COVID-19 by 70 percent, according to a study of an outbreak on the USS Theodore Roosevelt, a US Navy class air force carrier where people live in close proximity. Socializing sans masks is the main culprit of the spread of this deadly virus.

Limited cafeteria hours, empty vending machines and the closed juice bar pose issues to students who rely on eating on campus. Although these resources are important for Monarchs, they should be encouraged to take advantage of the limited services available, prepare lunches before hand or plan to eat off campus. Students should take into consideration that these inconveniences serve the greater good.

### The students are hungry; it is time to bring refreshments back

Movita juice bar and refreshment centers have been closed. That needs to change.

BENJAMIN ROYER  
VALLEY LIFE EDITOR

Iced vanilla latte with almond milk, please. Oh, and some acai as well!

Flashback to March 2020, where students of Valley College could walk into the Movita Juice Bar, order themselves a cup of Peet's Coffee, sit down and do schoolwork. Between classes and before arriving for their next course, students could walk up to a vending machine, grab a drink and head into the classroom. Neither are available now, with the accessibility of refreshments disappearing with COVID-19.

Valley's campus has been open for a month, so the administration should reinstate the amenities students know and love.

On the front of Valley's coffee shop, Movita Juice Bar, a sign is posted from the inside of the door that reads, "Due to LAVC going mostly online we will be closed the week beginning with Monday 3/16 and until further notice."

Further notice is the troubling reality of this in-person return to campus. Movita Juice Bar's website says the Valley lo-

cation is "temporarily closed." The temporary closure has expanded over a year and there is no sight of immediate return.

Although Valley offers a wide variety of classes online, with the majority of students back on campus, there is no reason to ignore the sighs and chagrins of its students. Bring the energy of campus back into the fray.

Starting this semester, all courses are separated 30 minutes apart. A class that ends at 11:00 a.m. must give a student till 11:30 a.m. to arrive at their next class whether online or in-person.

Students do not have enough time to wait in the long lines at either the Cafeteria or Bookstore to buy a drink or snack. The wait pushes the chances of missing a class higher and creates the uncomfortable reality of being late.

In front of each building features a refreshments center with vending machines. If students were to walk up to a vending machine and to get a drink before class, the machine instead reads "out of order," with some dispensers empty since March 2020 and others still holding the same snacks from before the COVID-19 closure. Due to safety measures,

students must wear a mask and keep their mouths covered at all times. With this added precaution, there is not enough time for students to drink and refresh during their courses, leaving students malnourished.

"Wearing a mask also causes you to drink less water than usual," according to the health and dental brand Colgate. "Dehydration can lead to dry mouth, increasing your risk of tooth decay and bad breath."

Bad breath and dry mouth are a poor combo.

The return to campus after a full year away is difficult enough; Valley should ease the return by refreshing the establishments previously in place.

### EDITORS NOTE

The views expressed on this page are solely those of the writer and do not necessarily reflect those of the Valley Star, its instructors, editors, staff or those of Los Angeles Valley College, its administration, faculty, staff or students.



PHOTOS BY LUIS FLORES | THE VALLEY STAR

WOMENS SOCCER - Stacey Rodwell, assistant coach for the Valley Monarchs, walks back to the sideline after giving her team a speech after the first half of the game on Tuesday.

# Valley College Monarchs drop soccer match to Citrus College



THROW-IN- The Monarchs prepare for a throw-in, while attempting to get back in the game.



DRIVING- Midfielder Jessica Romero captures the ball during their home game against Citrus College.

Valley's women's soccer team hosted Citrus College in its first Western State Conference matchup of the season on Sept. 28. Even though the Monarchs dropped the match 4-0, the contest showcased Monarchs' defense.

Text by Benjamin Royer



SOCCER - Kristen Lum, goalkeeper for the Valley Monarchs, massages her neck after attempting to block a second goal from Citrus College.

## SCHEDULE

- FOOTBALL**
- LA Harbor College at Valley College Oct. 2 @ 6pm
  - Santa Ana College at Santa Ana Oct. 9 @ 1pm
- MEN'S WATER POLO**
- Cuesta College at Valley College Oct. 6 @ 3pm
  - Chaffey College at Valley College Oct. 9 @ 10am
  - Citrus College at Citrus College Oct. 13 @ 3pm
- WOMEN'S BASKETBALL**
- Scrimmage at Ventura College Oct. 9 @ TBA
- WOMEN'S SOCCER**
- West LA College at West LA Oct. 1 @ 4pm
  - Glendale College at Glendale Oct. 5 @ 7pm
  - College of the Canyons at Valley College Oct. 8 @ 4pm
  - Bakersfield College at Bakersfield Oct. 12 @ 4pm
- WOMEN'S WATER POLO**
- Chaffey College at Valley College Oct. 9 @ 11:30am
  - Cuesta College at Valley College Oct. 13 @ 3:30pm